



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MEXICAN NATIONAL PLEADS GUILTY TO TRANSPORTING ILLEGAL ALIENS**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Mexican national pleaded guilty in federal court today to transporting illegal aliens within the United States.

**Miricio Mendoza-Butron**, 25, of Mexico, pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge James C. England this afternoon to transporting illegal aliens within the United States.

By pleading guilty, **Mendoza-Butron** admitted that he transported 14 illegal aliens within the United States in a motor vehicle on Feb. 24, 2004, in Greene County, Mo.

Specifically, **Mendoza-Butron** was transporting 14 illegal aliens in a GMC seven-passenger van that had an Arizona license plate. The only seats in the van were the driver's and front passenger's seats. Thirteen of the aliens were riding lying or sitting on the floor of the van without seat belts, Graves said. **Mendoza-Butron** picked up his passengers in Phoenix, Ariz., on Feb. 22, 2004, and was transporting them to Pennsylvania where the passengers hoped to obtain work. **Mendoza-Butron** drove the van the entire trip, and each passenger was expected to pay **Mendoza-Butron** \$500 for transportation to Pennsylvania. The passengers had not left the van during the trip, and urinated into a plastic gallon jug during the trip, Graves added.

The passengers had entered the United States illegally earlier in February by walking across Mexico's border with the United States and traveling to Phoenix.

**Mendoza-Butron** was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Feb. 26, 2004, in Springfield.

Under federal statutes, Graves explained, **Mendoza-Butron** could be subject to a maximum sentence of up to 20 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$1

million. His sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Douglas C. Bunch. It was investigated by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

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